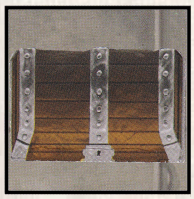
HQ HomeBrew presents

McGuffins, Obstacles, & Red Herrings for HeroQuest

Gloomhaven chits adaptation part 2 for my HeroQuest game. As with the previous adaptation I am using the chit artwork as a inspiration to derive concepts. This particular article focuses on the ideas of McGuffins (the reason for a quest), Obstacles (challenges to the Heroes), and Red Herrings (distractions and misdirections). These are different that the basic game in that none are inherently dangerous to the Heroes directly. They are more like story movers, and signals for story progression. In this article on some of the chitsI have combined the art of 2 or 3 chits from Gloomhaven to create a unique one for HeroQuest. All of these chits are the size of a single square on the board.

1) **Stone Stairs.** Much like the regular stairs these denote an exit or entrance to another location. That location may be on the current board or to the next quest. The single space constrictive nature of the stone steps prevents Heroes from crowding a single location. Placed outside door it becomes a representation that the door is of a height that a diagonal attack cannot reach through it, and the door camping issue is solved.

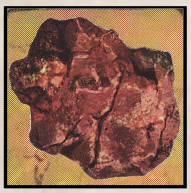


2) **Silver Banded Chest**. The Silver Banded chest is used consistently to contain helpful items such as potions, non-magic items, or minor artifacts. Placed behind a simple obstacle or in a lightly defended room Heroes are are likely to rush into the room and act rashly. This allows for convenient placement of traps in the room, and on furniture in the room that is not the chest. Silver is a “less” valuable metal than gold so Heroes have been known to let their guard down if they believe the payoff is low.

3) **Gold Banded Chest**. Like the Silver Banded Chest the Gold Banded Chest maintains treasure. Heroes seeing this type of chest become very cautious of the traps that might be in the room. The most effective use of the Gold Banded Chest is to place it in the rear of a highly contentious area with lots of enemies. Greedy Heroes will tactility fight to be the one to search the room first and open the Gold Banded Chest. It is easy to take advantage of the avarice of these Heroes and cause their down fall. Convenient placement of this type of chest will cause confusion in Heroes, they will wonder where the danger is located. In lightly guarded rooms or empty room these chests are empty and can cause mild frustration.

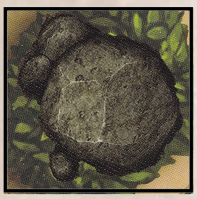
4) **Stone Casket**. Unlike the full sized Caskets from the *Return of the Witch Lord* used for full grown people, this Stone Casket contains the remains of a child, pet, or the cremated remains of a full grown adult. The carved stone of the casket shows the wealth of the family that had it crafted. Being stone it is heavy and ponderous to carry. It may be kept in a mausoleum, family crypt, or catacomb.
   - If the Heroes are tasked with returning this item, the Hero carrying it must have a current Body Points of 5 or more and may not attack. If attacked they roll only their Armor and Helmet Defense Dice. Shields, Bracers, and Cloaks will have no effect. The Hero's Defense Die will not reduce to less than 1.

5) **Wooden Casket**. As with the Stone Casket the Wooden Casket is for a child or pet. Wooden caskets of this size are generally for only the most special of a poor family's children. With everyone else being buried directly in the dirt. These Wooden Caskets can be stacked or stored in a catacomb, or in the storage room of a cottage. Rarely will they have valuables in them, though some families value their ancestors and lost young.
   - If the Heroes are tasked with returning this item, the Hero carrying it must have a current Body Points of 4 or more and may not attack. If attacked they roll only their Armor and Helmet Defense Dice. Shields, Bracers, and Cloaks will have no effect. Their Defense Dice will not reduce to less than 1. Any Skulls from the attack that are not blocked by the Defense Dice may damage the Wooden Casket. Roll a Red Die for each unblocked skull. On a roll of 6, the Casket is damaged. On a second roll of 6 the casket is destroyed with it's contents.



6) **Corundum Boulder.** A rough uncut gemstone, large enough to destabilize the realm's economy if it is retrieved by anyone other than the King and his loyal subjects.
   - Being too heavy to carry some Heroes may want to try and chip off smaller shards. Non-artifact weapons will do no damage, but let them try any way. Artifact weapons used to chip away at the boulder will be successful if a Hero spends their entire turn, (to include all other actions and free actions) trying to chip off a shard. 6 cumulative skulls of damage over multiple turns of attacks with an Artifact grade weapon will result in a shard worth 25 gold. Scaring from this activity will show on the boulder and the King will not like that.
   - The gem is large enough to block Line of Sight and Movement. A hero may climb over it if they use their entire turn to do so, regardless of their movement roll. They will end their turn on top of the boulder. On their next turn they may climb down or jump. If they jump they take 3 Body points of damage and armor will not prevent it. If they climb down it will take a full turn to reach the the bottom regardless of their Movement roll.
   - While on top of the boulder the Hero may only use ranged weapons and spells.

7) **Star Silver Boulder**. Like the Corundum Bolder there is a tremendous amount of interest from the King in acquiring this treasure before it falls into the wrong hands.
   - The Star Silver Boulder is too large and heavy to move or carry.
   - It blocks Line of Sight and Movement in the same manner as the Corundum Bolder.
   - The same rules for the Corundum Bolder apply for climbing over and down.
   - While on top of the boulder a Hero may only use ranged weapons and spells.
   - Dwarfs and Goblins both gain +1 Attack Die while this boulder is in their Line of Sight, they have some cultural influences that drives their desire to own it.
   - The Star Silver Boulder cannot be chipped, only dented. Let the greedy Heroes figure this out on their own.



8) **Magnetic Iron Boulder.** A Super strong magnetic field emanates from this boulder. This is only noticed by individuals using metallic weapons and armor.
   - Heroes in metal armor approaching this boulder count every 2 Squares as 1 Movement. Heroes in metal armor moving away from this boulder count every Square as 2 Movement. This effect remains consistent as long as the Boulder can trace a straight line to the Hero that dose not pass through a wall, or corner of a wall. Enemies, other Heroes, and doors do not interfere with this effect.
   - Heroes with metallic weapons fighting while in the boulder's area of effect do so with 1 less Attack Die for each metal weapon and piece of metal armor that they are wearing or using. For example a Barbarian with a broad sword would have 2 Attack Dice, where as a Knight with a short sword, and a metal shield would have 0 Attack Dice.
   - When a metal wearing Hero attacks an enemy that is between the Hero and the Boulder, the Hero gains +1 Attack Die,if the Hero is in the middle, the enemy gains the +1 Attack Die.

9) **Tree Stump**. This tree stump is home to the pixies and fairies used by Druids to cast their spells. Or perhaps it is one of the hollowed out tree stumps that contains the heart of a great villain stashed in a magic bottle. As a hollowed stump it may be the nest of a great serpent or the hidden entrance to a sub quest line. Whichever you choose:
   - It blocks movement and Line of Sight.
   - Any spell with "fire" in the title will set it ablaze, and it will burn the rest of the quest. Heroes and enemies adjacent to it will take 1 Body Point of damage every round.

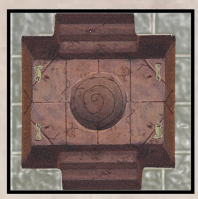
10) **Fallen Tree Limb**. Few things block a path like a fallen tree limb. This limb blocks Line of Sight for human, orc, and smaller sized creatures. Larger creatures like ogers just look right over the Fallen Tree Limb.
   - Creatures smaller than Ogers move through the Fallen Tree Limb space for 4 Movement used on 1 movement action.
   - Oger sized and larger sized creatures must spend 2 movement to pass through a Fallen Tree Limb square.
   - It also burns like the Tree Stump.

11) **Stalagmites**: These rocks convey a unique unpredictable property on the plants that grow around them. In any quest one hero may roll 1 Red Die and collect that many leaves. The hero may then consume 1 leaf before performing any action on their turn, roll in the following table for the result:

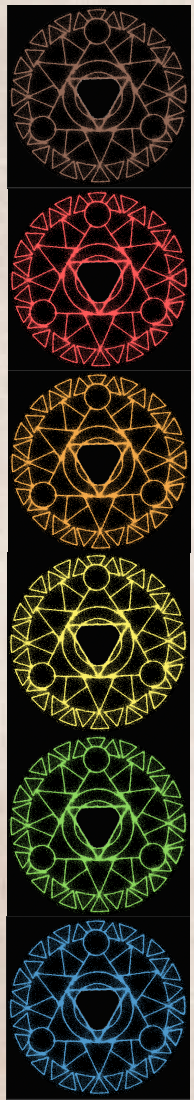
   1 – nothing happens, biter and nasty, but that is all.
   2 –The Hero adds +1 Attack Die to the Hero's attack this turn.
   3 – The Hero loses -1 Attack Die this turn.
   4 – If the Hero has not yet moved their full movement for the turn, they may move the rest of it after performing their action.
   5 – Heal 1 Body point of damage.
   6 – Something is happening, the hero can feel it, they just need to consume another leaf to make it happen. If they have one they consume it and re-roll. If they don't have another leaf, their Maximum Mind Points will drop 1 point for the duration of the quest. Example: if they had a Mind Points of 4 at the beginning of the quest, their current Mind Points will become 3 and that is the highest it will be for the remainder of the quest. After the quest their mind will return to their normal Maximum Mind Points.

12) **Petrified Tree Stump**. A Petrified Tree Stump can represent all the same things as a regular Tree Stump with few additional options. As it is wood and stone it could be the source of materials for crafting healing charms or shielding charms. The heroes would need to collect enough quality shards and return them to the alchemist though.
   - Blocks Movement and Line of Sight if it is a tall stump.
   - Blocks just movement if it is a short stump used as a table.
   - Can be passed through with the Pass Through Rock spell.

13) **Totem on a Pedestal.** Totems hold deep spiritual power for the faiths that use them. They are symbolic of the ideals and concepts held in awe by the faith to which they belong. Depending on the perception of the individual, a faith is a religion to the believer, and a cult to the non-believer. "Holy Symbols" are only holy to the faithful follower, otherwise they are Totems to non-believers. The pedestal or the Totem may be trapped.
   - Totems are on pedestals because they are important to someone.
   - Heroes may be tasked to: steal, destroy, install, or return, one or more Totems.
   - A Totems on a Pedestal blocks Movement and Line of Sight.
   - The Pass Through Rock spell will allow a Hero to pass through a Totem on a Pedestal.



14) **Empty Alter**. An Empty Alter is just waiting for a sacrifice to be delivered. The sacrifice may be goods, living animals, people, or wealth in the form of treasures. Heroes willing to place a sacrifice on the Empty Alter can feel good knowing that the entity to which it is dedicated will know there is a sacrifice. If you want to include boons from other worldly beings here are some suggestions:
    - The Hero could gain a single spell at random if the Sacrifice is of 300 gold or more in value.
    - It can trigger any quest dependent situation, like the cultists rush out of hiding.
    - It is trapped and the trap triggers under the weight of the sacrifice.
    - Perhaps there are a series of alters in need of various sacrifices that move the quest forward or provide a side quest.
    - Why is it empty? Did the sacrifice wander off? Was it stolen? What happens if it is not returned?
    - The Empty Alter dose not block Line of Sight or movement, but a hero standing on it is considered elevated compared to the surrounding area and other Heroes.



15) **Mystical Circle**. Mystical Circles are used to delineate one square from another and either attune or attenuate mystical power within that square. Mystical Circles can be called “Holy Circles”, or “Magic Circles”, or in a field of wheat, “Crop Circles”. They are used in various manners and different colors of the circles may mean different things. When using Mystical Circles remain consistent as Hero's learn the color representations they begin to plan predictably. This allows you to take advantage of their “advantage”. There are a selection of 10 colors from which to choose. Here are a dozen options to use.
    - Summoning Circle: Can summon enemies of the corresponding color once per turn until the circle is destroyed.
    - Circle Power: A caster may cast a second spell while on a circle of a corresponding color, for example: Red – Fire Blue – Water Brown – Earth Grey – Air Indigo – Dread
    - Circle of Protection: Adds 1 Defense Die to the defense rolls of a Hero standing on it when attacked by an enemy of a corresponding default color.
    - Bane Circle, adds 1 Attack Die to the attack rolls of a Hero standing on it when attacking an enemy of a corresponding default color.
    - Power Drain: a random spell is removed from the first Hero to pass over the Circle. It then degrades and no longer functions.
    - Transport Circle: Fires once and then becomes inert. The Hero that moved onto it is instantly transported to another place on the quest map.
    - The Heroes must destroy all the Mystic Circles of Zargon's minions.
    - The Heroes must create ta number of Mystic Circles needed to transport in the Kings troops and support personel.
    - Dread Cultists stand on the circles when practicing their rituals.
    - Heroes must each occupy a circle to enable a quest event to take place.
    - Enemies on red circles gain an additional Attack Die when fighting Heroes.
    - Bloodless Circle: Projectiles that pass over a circle freeze in midair and then fall to the floor.